

Message on United Nations Day

24 October 2008

UNITED NATIONS/NATIONS UNIES THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On this 63rd anniversary of our Organization, I join you in celebrating UN Day.

This is a crucial year in the life of our United Nations. We have just passed the midpoint in the struggle to reach the Millennium Development Goals -- our common vision for building a better world in the 21st century. We can see more clearly than ever that the threats of the 21st century spare no one. Climate change, the spread of disease and deadly weapons, and the scourge of terrorism all cross borders. If we want to advance the global common good, we must secure global public goods.

Many countries are still not on track to reach the Millennium Development Goals by the target date of 2015. I am also deeply concerned about the impact of the global financial crisis. Never has leadership and partnership been more important.

This makes our success at the high-level MDG event in September all the more remarkable. We brought together a broad coalition for change. Governments, CEOs and civil society. We generated unprecedented commitment in pledges and partnerships to help the world's poor.

The final tally is not in yet, but the total amount pledged at the MDG event may exceed 16 billion dollars.

Partnership is the way of the future. Just look at the advances on malaria. Our global malaria effort has brought us within range of containing a disease that kills a child every 30 seconds. It is doing so through focused country planning. Greater funding. Coordinated global management. Top-notch science and technology.

We need models like these to tackle other challenges, including climate change, as we approach the conferences on Poznan and Copenhagen. We need them to achieve all the other Millennium Development Goals.

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Let us keep building on this as a way forward. There is no time to lose. The United Nations must deliver results for a safer, healthier, more prosperous world. On this UN Day, I call on all partners and leaders to do their part and keep the promise.